(iii) Prioritize the different project components for preparation of Detailed Project Reports and implementation;

(iv) Propose suitable organizational structure for implementing the project;

(v) Consider various modalities for project funding; and

(vi) Consider international dimesnsions that may be invovled in some poject components.

The Task Force is working to suggest and guide the task of achieving the goal of interlinking of rivers by the end of 2016.

(c) & (d) Captain Dastur and Dr. K. L. Rao have mooted Garland Canal Scheme and Ganga-Cauvery link respectively in the past. The proposal of Captain Dastur was examined by two committees of Experts comprising experts from Central Water Commission, State Governments and Professors from Indian Institute of Technology and University of Roorkee who were of the opinion that the proposal was technically unsound and economically prohibitive. Similarly, the Ganga-Gauvery link was examined by Central Water Commission and found to be grossly under estimated. Besides, the proposal was also devoid of any flood control benefit and required large block of power for lifting water. Both proposals were, therefore, given up.

(e) to (g) The feasibility studies being carried out by National Water Development Agency cover studies pertaining to environment and ecological surveys. In its studies, a minimum lean season flow of 10% of the total flows at diversion structure after meeting downstream requirements is being provided to maintain the environmental and ecological needs of the river regime and the downstream areas including coastal water and fisheries resources.

WRITTEN ANSWERSTO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Open slots in airports to foreign commercial flights

2007. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have offered open slots in our airports to foreign commercial aircraft;

(b) if so, the details of the Government policy and of the foreign airlines who are taking advantage of this policy; and

(c) the benefits accrued or likely to accrue Air India and Indian Airlines by this policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) No open slots at our airports have been offered to foreign commercial aircraft. However, for the peak winter tourist season, Government has adopted open sky policy under which foreign airlines can increase capacity as per demand under commercial arrangement with our national carriers. Lufthansa, Virgin Atlantic, Emirates, Singapore Airlines, Malaysian Airlines and South African Airways have deployed additional capacity under this policy. Our national carriers have gained by way of commercial arrangement.

Smoking at airports

† 2008. DR. A. K. PATEL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that people continue to smoke at airports despite the prohibitory boards displayed there by Government;

(b) if so, the number of persons fined for smoking at different airports by Government by the end of 2002; and

(c) the State-wise details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) It is a fact that at times people smoke in the "No Smoking" areas at the airports. Officials of Airports Authority of India (AAI) whenever detect persons smoling in the 'No-Smoking Zone' request them to refrain from smoking in the "No Smoking" area and direct them to the exclusive smoking zones created for this purpose. AAI officials generally take only preventive action in this regard rather than punitive action. During the year 2002, only four cases have been fined and all these four cases occurred at IGI Airport, Delhi.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.